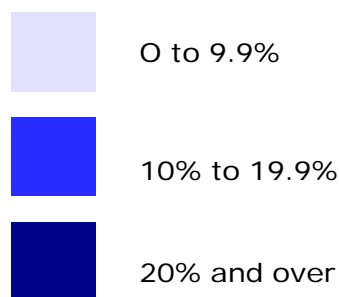
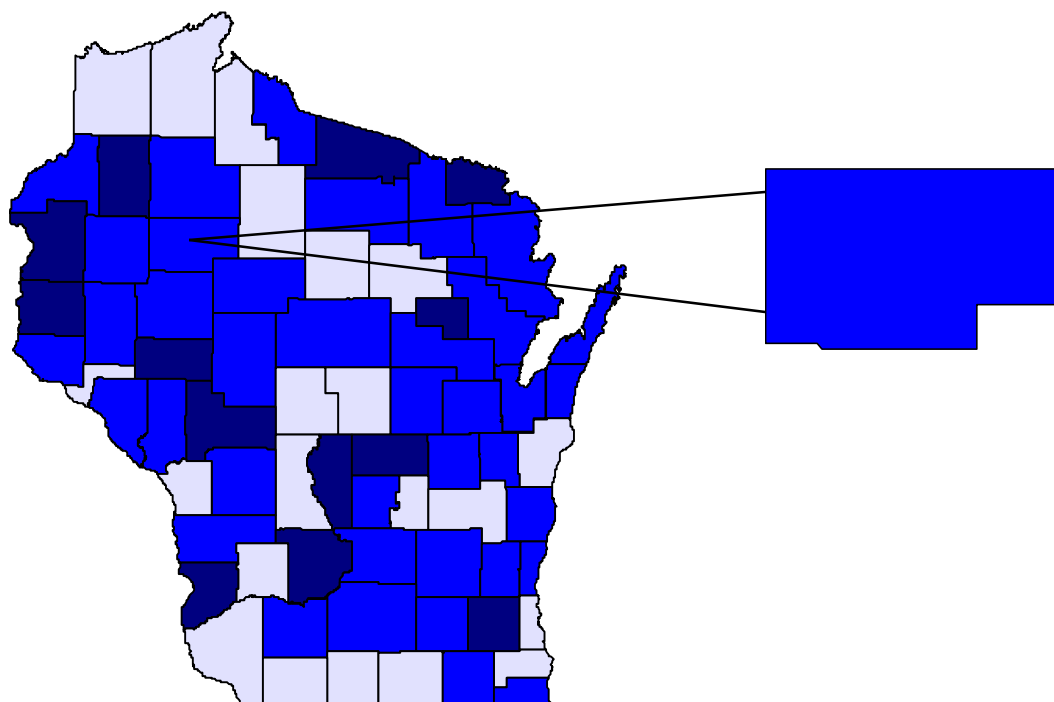


Rusk County Workforce Profile

Job Growth 1994 to 1999



Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
Division of Workforce Solutions
Bureau of Workforce Information
October 2001



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Introduction

The County Workforce Profile has been developed by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) Bureau of Workforce Information (BWI) to provide a broad overview of Rusk County's labor market. The data included in this fourth year of publication is for 1999 to maintain consistency with the previous publications and to provide the user with a single year of reference in order to draw comparisons and form a picture of related labor force and employment information.

A variety of economic and demographic labor market information have been provided to describe the current labor market conditions in the counties and regions of Wisconsin. That information includes 1999 data on population, labor force, industries, employment, wages and income. The narrative describes how local conditions have changed over one-year and five-year intervals. Although population information is available from the 2000 census, it is not included in this publication since the period of time selected for all data sets is 1999. For more recent releases of information please consult the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Labor Market Information website: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi>.

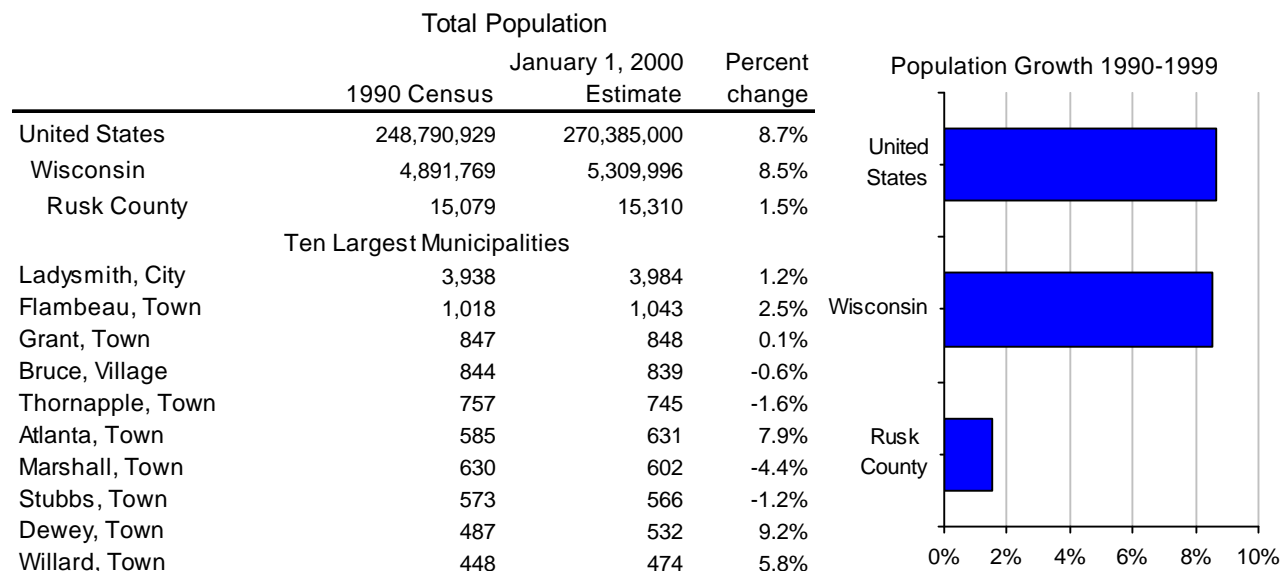
For more detailed information or clarification, please contact your local labor market analyst, Beverly Gehrke, by telephone (715-634-5289) or email (gehrkb@dwd.state.wi.us).

DWD is an equal opportunity service provider. If you need assistance to access services or material in an alternate format, please contact the analyst listed above.

Rusk County Population and Civilian Labor Force

The total population in Rusk County grew 1.5 percent from 1990 to January 2000, less than both state and national expansion. The City of Ladysmith, the county's largest municipality, added 46 residents, as did the town of Atlanta. The Town of Dewey added 45 residents. Together, the population growth in these three municipalities comprised 59 percent of the increase in county population since 1990 occurred there. Most of the increase in population was from natural causes (1,813 births vs. 1,649 deaths), although 67 new residents did migrate to the county. The county net migration rate of 0.4 percent is among the lowest in the state and below the state migration rate of 3.7 percent.

Of the 15,310 residents living in the county at the end of 1999, 11,802 (77%) were 16 years and older. Since 1990, this population increased 414, while the segment aged 15 years and under decreased 182, resulting in a net county population increase of 231.

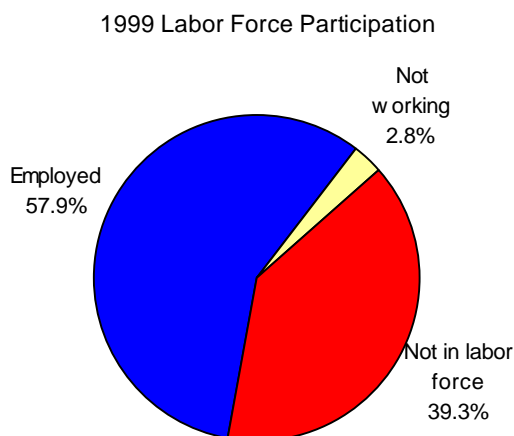


* Rusk County portion only

Source: WI Dept. of Admin., Demographic Services Center, *Official Population Estimates*, January 1, 2000

The segment of the population 16 years and older is important because the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics use the age of 16 as the demarcation point for entrants into the potential labor force. The labor force, by definition, includes those who are either working or looking for work, but does not include individuals who have made a choice to not work: retirees, homemakers, and students; nor does it include institutional residents, military personnel, or discouraged job seekers.

Labor force participation increases and contracts with changes in labor market conditions. For example, each spring the Rusk County labor force expands as seasonal workers enter the labor market either to begin a job or to start looking for work.



Source: Estimated from WI Dept of Administration population estimates, Jan 2000, US Census Bureau, and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The number of residents aged 16 years and over who are in the labor market determines the labor force participation rate. In 1999, the non-institutional population 16 years and over was 11,535. Of those, 7,000 were actively participating in the labor force and the labor force participation rate was 60.7 percent. That is a lower participation rate than in 1990 and is below both the state and national participation rates of 72.3 and 67.1 percent, respectively. Labor force participation has begun to decline as more of the population nears retirement age.

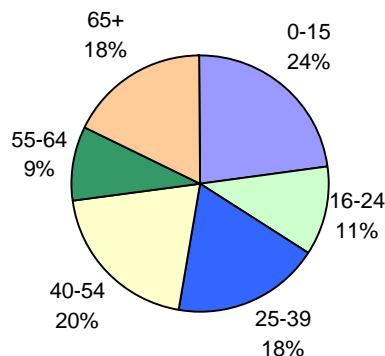
Labor force participation changes as younger residents age and interest in working and holding a job increases. Teenagers are less likely to participate in the labor force because they are in school. Residents between the ages of 25-54 share the most incentives to work and have the highest participation rates. At 55, however, workers begin to withdraw from the labor market and, by 65, most workers have retired.

In Rusk County, nearly one-quarter of the labor force age population (16 years and over) is 65 years and older. Another 14 percent are 55-64 years old. Participation drops to less than 50 percent for 55-64 year olds, and to less than 10 percent for those over 65 years old. That is one of the reasons that labor force participation in the county is so low. One of the groups with some of the highest participation rates that sometimes exceed 90 percent, the 25-39 year olds, is declining in size and there are few younger residents waiting in the wings. By 2010 40 percent of the labor force age population will be over 55 years old. While the labor force age population continues to increase there will be fewer available workers in the labor market. More of the labor supply will be thinking of retirement, not work.

Rusk County Labor Force Age Population Distribution

Age Group	Population		Percent change
	1990 Census	1999 Estimate	
0-15	3,690	3,509	-4.9%
16-24	1,689	1,742	3.1%
25-39	3,183	2,781	-12.6%
40-54	2,358	3,101	31.5%
55-64	1,415	1,451	2.5%
65+	2,743	2,727	-0.6%

Source: Estimated from WI Dept of Admin, Demographic Services Center, Official Population Projections 1990-2020 and US Census Bureau



Rusk County Civilian Labor Force Data

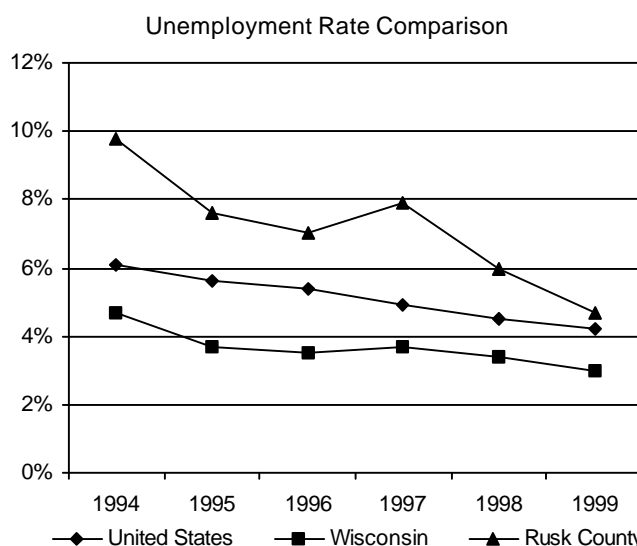
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Labor Force	7,100	7,200	7,100	7,200	7,100	7,000
Employed	6,400	6,600	6,600	6,600	6,700	6,700
Unemployed	700	540	500	570	430	330
Unemployment Rate	9.8%	7.6%	7.0%	7.9%	6.0%	4.7%

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate differs from the percent of the labor force age population not working. The unemployment rate is a percent of labor force participants (60.7% of the labor force age population in Rusk County) who are unemployed and actively looking for work. The number of unemployed in the county includes not only those who are receiving unemployment benefits, but also any resident who actively looked for a job and did not find it.

Out of a total labor force in Rusk County in 1999 of 7,000, 4.7 percent were unemployed. This is higher than both the state and national unemployment rates of 3.0 and 4.2 percent, respectively, in 1999. It is lower, however, than five years ago when the labor force was larger and more of that labor force was unemployed.

More residents were employed in 1999 than in the previous five years. Since total employment counts individuals (some who work more than one job) it can decline even as the number of wage and salary jobs increases. Also, the number of employed in Rusk County includes not only residents who work for employers located both in and beyond the county boundaries but all self-employed residents and proprietors. Roughly 25 percent of the



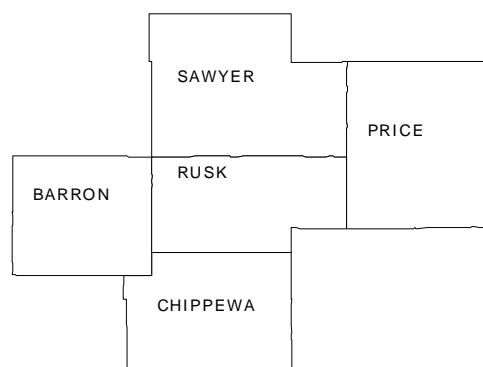
Source: WIDWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

number of employed in Rusk County are either farm or nonfarm proprietors. Since 1994, the number of total employed in the county increased by nearly 300 while the number of proprietors increased 200 during the same time span.

Rusk County Commuting Patterns

	Commute To	Commute From	Net Commute
Barron County	319	57	-262
Chippewa County	129	224	95
Price County	42	150	108
Sawyer County	44	114	70
Taylor County	25	137	112
Elsewhere	200	21	-179
Total	810	754	-56
Commute within County	5,260		

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information. *Wisconsin's Commuting Patterns*, 1994

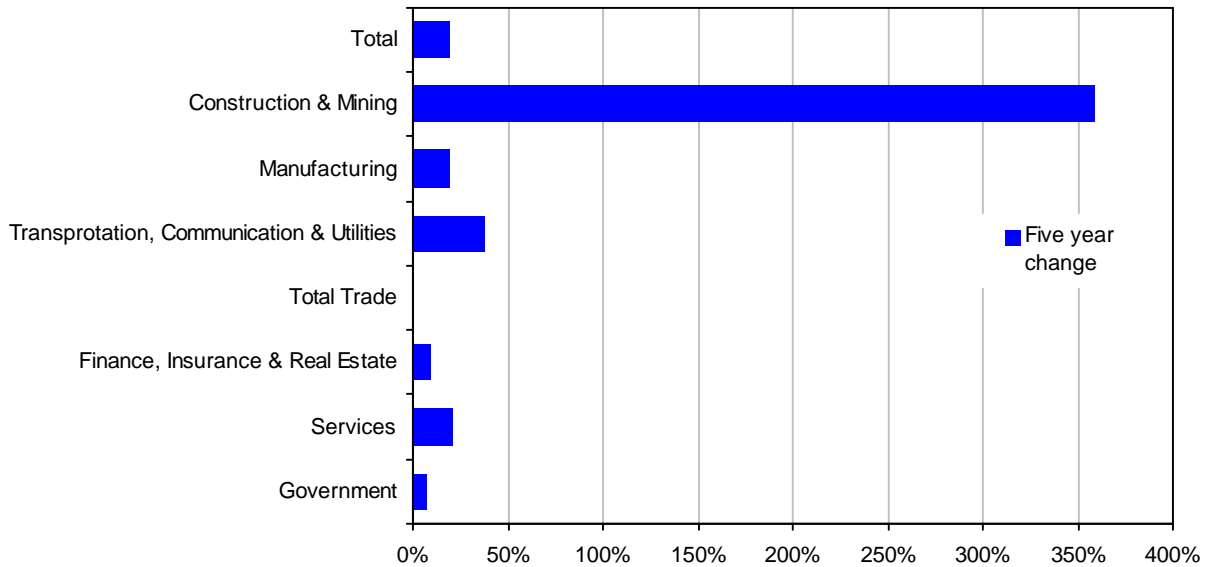


Note: Information on commuting patterns of workers is available only from decennial census data. Since 1990 the number of workers has increased and so has travel on area highways. Until the 2000 census is released, however, the only data we have remains from 1990.

The county labor force includes all employed and unemployed residents who live in the county, even though they may travel out of the county to work. In Rusk County that includes 11 percent of the labor force, roughly 810 residents, who commute to surrounding communities for a job. The most traveled to destination is the City of Rice Lake. Of the nearly 320 who travel to Barron County, over 37 percent of them work in Rice Lake.

Just a few more workers leave the county for neighboring communities than enter. Most of the commuters entering the county are headed for the City of Ladysmith, which is also one of the primary destinations for most of the employed residents of the county. Of the workers who commute within the county, one in every two works in Ladysmith, which is home to seven of the county's largest employers.

Rusk County Employment Change by Industry 1994 to 1999



	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Percent change	
Total	5,120	5,403	5,316	5,431	5,704	6,071	6.4%	18.6%
Goods Producing	2,038	1,987	2,044	2,130	2,386	2,653	11.2%	30.2%
Construction & Mining	68	81	86	143	232	312	34.3%	359.0%
Manufacturing	1,970	1,906	1,957	1,987	2,154	2,342	8.7%	18.9%
Durable	1,530	1,454	1,489	1,523	1,720	1,909	11.0%	24.8%
Nondurable	440	452	468	464	434	432	-0.4%	-1.8%
Service Producing	3,083	3,416	3,273	3,301	3,318	3,418	3.0%	10.9%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	181	212	241	227	239	250	4.6%	37.9%
Total Trade	827	991	832	821	818	831	1.6%	0.5%
Wholesale	128	128	116	113	115	119	3.5%	-6.6%
Retail	699	863	715	707	703	712	1.3%	1.8%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	114	119	119	125	131	124	-5.6%	9.2%
Services & Misc.	773	866	852	913	940	934	-0.6%	20.8%
Total Government	1,188	1,229	1,229	1,215	1,190	1,279	7.5%	7.7%

Source: WIDWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, Nonfarm Wage & Salary estimates.

Note: Nonfarm wage and salary employment measures the number of jobs within a county excluding family farming, military, and proprietors. This data, often referred to as 'place of work' data, indicates the number of jobs at the work site without consideration of where the jobholder lives.

Rusk County nonfarm wage and salary employment exceeded state growth in both the one- and five-year intervals. Overall, Rusk County employers added 950 jobs during the five-year period, primarily by manufacturing and construction industry division employers. The majority of the increase in jobs (620) was in the goods producing sector, while the service producing sector expanded by 335 jobs. Most of the growth in the service producing sector occurred in the services industry and centered around expansions of health services, especially home care providers.

Manufacturing employers, included in the goods producing sector of the economy, added 370 jobs over the five-year interim, but those years were marked by both plant closures and expansions. Over half of that increase occurred in the last year. The manufacturing share of total employment increased from 38 percent in 1994 to 39 percent in 1999 and is much higher than the share statewide of 22 percent. Construction jobs, also included in the goods producing sector, were high in 1990 when workers were hired (temporarily) to excavate the site for Flambeau Mining Co. Once the mine began operating, construction and mining employment fell. It increased again in late 1996 as the reclamation of the mine began. Other construction projects have maintained high employment levels.

Rusk County's Largest Industries and Employers

Top 10 Industry Groups

Industry Group	March 2000		Numerical Change	
	Employers	Employment	1 Year	5 Years
Lumber And Wood Products	12	1,243	-43	461
Educational Services	6	711	-47	41
Executive, Legislative, And General	29	662	54	28
Food Stores	*	*	*	*
Electronic & Other Electric Equipment	*	*	*	*
Eating And Drinking Places	30	305	85	28
Social Services	8	284	23	-17
Apparel And Other Textile Products	*	*	*	*
Special Trade Contractors	21	146	23	87
Furniture And Fixtures	3	143	-33	*

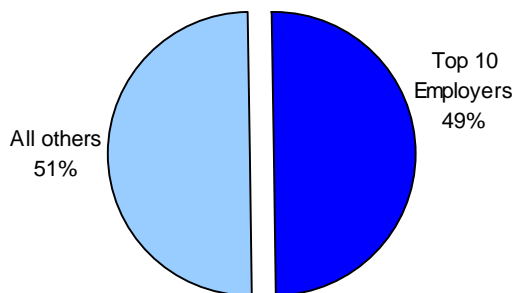
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Top 10 Employers

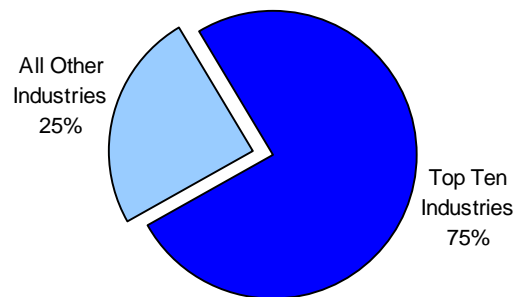
Company	Product or Service	Size
Weather Shield Mfg Inc	Lumber & wood products: windows and doors	500-999
Jeldwen Inc (Norco Windows Inc)	Lumber & wood products: windows and doors	500-999
County of Rusk	Executive and general government	500-999
Allenbradley Co LLC	Electric components: control devices	250-499
Artisans Inc	Apparel products: screenprinting	250-499
Ladysmith-Hawkins School District	Education	100-249
Mount Senario College	Education	100-249
School District of Flambeau	Education	100-249
Bruce Public School	Education	100-249
Indianhead Community Action Agency	Social services: community action	100-249

Source: WI DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information Bureau, ES-202 file tape, 1st quarter 1999 and LMI benchmark 2000.

Top 10 Employers Share of Nonfarm Employment



Top 10 Industry Groups Share of Nonfarm Employment

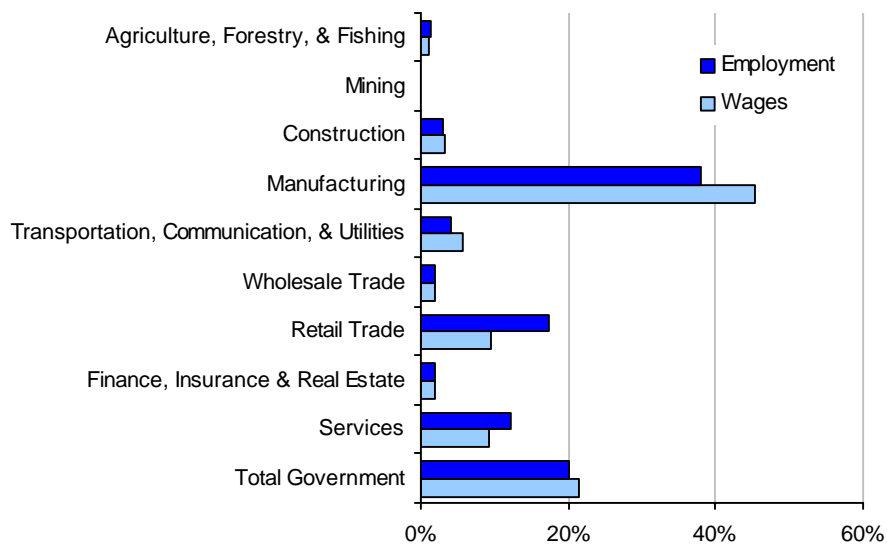


Only ten employers in Rusk County, out of a total of 390, provide nearly half the jobs and four of them are manufacturers. The four industry groups that appear on the list of largest industries further demonstrate the strength of manufacturing employment: lumber and wood, electrical and electronic component, apparel, and furniture and fixture products. Of these, only furniture and fixture products is not represented on the list of the county's largest employers. The second largest industry group, education services, includes both public and private institutions and employment is most often included with the larger government sector since most schools are funded by local taxes. Employment with private education facilities, such as Mount Senario College, is included in the services industry division. Two other industry groups, social and health care services, are part of the services industry division, and all but health care are represented on the largest employer list. The largest health care facility in the county is owned by the County of Rusk and all of the employment is reported in government. Two industry groups represent the retail trade division: eating and drinking places and food stores. Most of the employers in retail trade are small, but together they employ many workers.

Rusk County Employment and Wages 1999

	Annual Average Wage	State Average Wage	Percent of State Average	Percent change 1 year	Percent change 5 year	Number of Workers
All Industries	\$21,581	\$29,609	72.9%	3.1%	21.6%	6,031
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	\$18,037	\$21,499	83.9%	-0.6%	11.1%	78
Mining	*	\$39,968	*	*	*	*
Construction	\$24,980	\$36,772	67.9%	11.2%	62.6%	173
Manufacturing	\$25,737	\$37,773	68.1%	1.3%	28.5%	2,292
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	\$29,779	\$34,523	86.3%	6.0%	27.5%	253
Wholesale Trade	\$21,881	\$38,048	57.5%	9.5%	29.9%	115
Retail Trade	\$11,979	\$15,066	79.5%	2.8%	23.9%	1,042
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	\$19,764	\$37,911	52.1%	-1.7%	18.4%	122
Services	\$16,270	\$26,041	62.5%	11.0%	12.0%	738
Total Government	\$23,251	\$32,017	72.6%	5.2%	19.7%	1,207

Total Employment and Wage Distribution by Industry Division



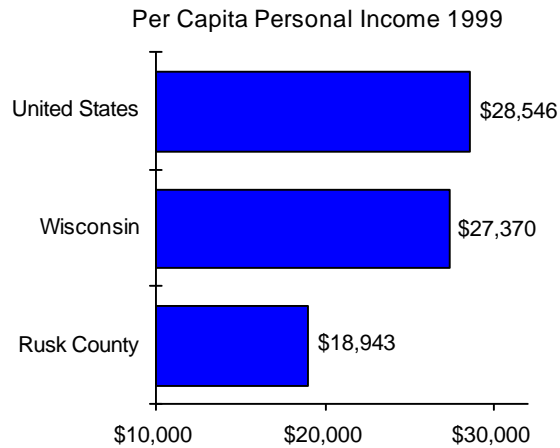
Source: WIDWD, Bureau of Workforce Information, *Employment, Wages and Taxes Due covered by Wisconsin's U.C. Law, Tables 209-211.*

Note – The data from Employment and Wages Covered by Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance Law differs from employment data in the nonfarm wage and salary estimates because: 1) multi-location employers report all workers and wages at a single site, i.e., retail franchises; 2) not all employers are covered by the unemployment insurance law and therefore are not included in this data, i.e., railroads, parochial schools.

In Rusk County, the industry with the most workers, manufacturing, had the highest payroll. Manufacturers employed an average of 2,292 workers in 1999 and had a total payroll of \$58,989,008. The second highest payroll, and number of workers, was in government with \$28,063,624. Retail trade had the third greatest share of employment and payroll at \$12,482,418 but had the lowest annual average wage in the county. Since many of the jobs in retail trade are part time, the industry has a high proportion of the county's workers who each receive a smaller share of total payroll. Even though the wages are low, they are closer to counter-part state wages than other industries.

Although manufacturing has the highest payroll, workers average only 68 percent of the annual average wage of their counterparts statewide. Workers in transportation, communication and utilities are closest to earnings of workers statewide. The greatest disparity in wages appears in finance, insurance and real estate. The annual average wage for all industries, out of a total payroll of \$130,257,254, is 73 percent of the state average wage of \$29,609. This is a lower ratio than in 1998, but higher a ratio than in four of the last five years. County increases in wages lagged the state increase of 3.8 percent from 1998 to 1999 and just missed the increase of 21.7 percent over the five-year period.

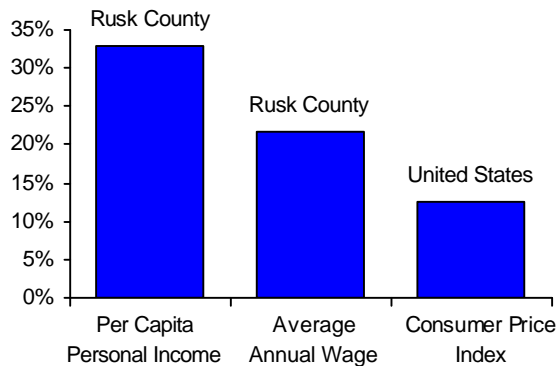
Rusk County Wage and Income Data



The per capita personal income (PCPI) includes total income from wages and self-employment, assets (dividends, interest, rent), and transfer payments (social security, insurance, welfare) divided by total population. In 1999, the PCPI in Rusk County was only 69 percent of the state's, and was the sixth lowest in the state.

The PCPI in Rusk County, which increased 33 percent in the last five years, exceeded both the national and state increase of 26.4 and 26.1 percent, respectively. Annual increases in the PCPI also exceeded both national and state increases in four of the last five years, including 1999, yet remains among the lowest in the state.

Comparison of Selected Data: 1994 - 1999



One reason is that transfer payments comprise 22 percent of total personal income (TPI) in Rusk County, compared with 12 percent in the state, and transfer payments increased only 18 percent in the last five years. Other components of TPI, income from net earnings and assets, increased 36 and 38.5 percent, respectively, but comprise a smaller share than in the state. Net earnings are 59 percent of TPI compared with 67 percent in the state. Net earnings include, not only wages of residents (many who work more than one job), but also self-employment and proprietor's income. The increase in net earnings, however, exceeded the increase in annual wages and was better than the state increase of 29 percent. Income from assets comprise 20 percent of TPI and increased 30 percent.

Per Capita Personal Income

							Percent Change	
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1 year	5 year
United States	\$22,581	\$23,562	\$24,651	\$25,874	\$27,321	\$28,546	4.5%	26.4%
Wisconsin	\$21,699	\$22,573	\$23,554	\$24,791	\$26,227	\$27,370	4.4%	26.1%
Rusk County	\$14,256	\$14,966	\$15,671	\$16,223	\$17,985	\$18,943	5.3%	32.9%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System.

Selected Occupational Wage Data

	Mean	Median
Assembler and fabricator	\$ 10.50	\$ 10.82
Cashier-checker	6.72	6.40
Cook, restaurant	7.93	7.43
Industrial truck op. (fork lift)	11.50	11.17
Inspector/tester, production	11.86	11.33
Janitor/Cleaner	8.70	8.24
Laborer, hand mover-frght/stock	9.20	9.09
Machine feeder/offbearer	8.78	8.63
Machinist	14.59	14.67
Maintenance repairer, general	12.43	11.97
Nurse aide	8.74	8.41
Production supervisors	17.03	16.26
Retail salesperson	8.40	7.09
Secretary	10.42	10.39
Woodworking machine setter/ops	9.80	9.68

Source: DWD, Bureau of Workforce Information 1999 OES wage survey for Balance-of-State (non-MSA) counties.

The wages for the selected occupations in this table were reported by employers in non-metropolitan counties in the state who responded to the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. Employers from all Wisconsin counties participated in the survey but published data was limited to MSAs and a grouping of 'balance-of-state' (BOS) counties. For comparison, the annual average wage of workers in Rusk County was 88 percent of that for workers in all BOS counties. However, that varies by industry from 99 percent in the transportation, communication and utilities division to 76 percent in wholesale trade.

Wages play a critical role in the economy as both workers and employers try to capitalize their worth. The labor shortage has placed additional pressure on wages and those occupations with a mean (average) and median (mid-point) wage relatively close reflect that. Mean wages include both very low and high wages, but as the labor market tightens employers offering low wages migrate closer to the mid-point.